

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-07 OPR-02 TRSE-00

OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 /088 W

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R 181730Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1975

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER//ECJ4/7

DIA WASH DC

SEC DEF WASH DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 043

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CG, AO

SUBJECT: THE INVASION OF SHABA: THE VIEW FROM LUBUMBASHI

AFTER THE FIRST WEEK

1. SUMMARY. SHABA'S INVASION IS SHOWING BOTH MILITARY AND POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES. SYMPATHY GROWING FOR INVADERS IN ABSENCE OF DECISIVE FAZ ACTION AND AS RESULT OF MANY YEARS OF HARASSMENT BY MILITARY. SPLIT BETWEEN LOCAL CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS IS ALSO GROWING. LUBUMBASHI IS CALM, BUT RUMORS RAMPANT AND LITTLE IS KNOWN ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THE FRONTIER. ALL SEEM TO BE WATCHING U.S. FOR INDICATION OF SUPPORT. END SUMMARY.

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2. IT IS INCREASINGLY APPARENT THAT THE INVASION OF SHABA HAS ACCOMPLISHED NOT ONLY CERTAIN MILITARY OBJECTIVES, BUT POLITICAL ONES AS WELL. MOST SERIOUSLY THERE ARE SIGNS OF WIDESPREAD SYMPATHY ON PART OF SHABA POPULATION FOR INVADERS. AT FIRST LATENT SYMPATHY SEEMED CONFINED TO NATIVES OF SHABA. INCREASINGLY, ONE HEARS THAT ZAIRIANS FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY DO NOT MIND

SEEING MILITARY WHO ARE BEST KNOWN LOCALLY FOR HARASSMENT AT ROADBLOCKS AND PETTY THIEVERY, TAKING A BEATING. THE WORD AROUND LUBUMBASHI IS THAT INVADERS ARE TREATING POPULATION WELL, AND RUMORS OF FAZ INCOMPETENCE AND DEMORALIZATION ARE RECITED ACCOMPANIED BY CROCODILE TEARS. IN FACT, POPULATION HERE IS IGNORANT OF WHAT IS GOING ON IN OCCUPIED AREAS, BUT MERE FACT OF EXISTENCE OF STORIES ABOUT BENEVOLENCE OF INVADERS AND UNDISCIPLINED BEHAVIOR OF FAZ IS DISTURBING FROM GOZ VIEWPOINT.

3. FOR LUNDA/TSCHOKWE PEOPLE OCCUPATION OF THEIR HOME AREA PRESENTS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE PROBLEM. WHILE REPORTS EXIST OF INVADERS BEING GREETED WARMLY, MORE INFORMED SOURCES SAY THAT LOCAL POPULATION TOO FRIGHTENED OF POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES TO BECOME INVOLVED WITH INVADERS. LUNDANS IN LUBUMBASHI TRYING ESPECIALLY TO RETAIN LOW PROFILE. MOST LUNDA AND EXPATRIATES CONTINUE TO EXPRESS GREAT FEAR ABOUT WHAT FAZ WILL DO TO RECAPTURE OCCUPIED COMMUNITIES. FAZ IS NOT LOOKED UPON AS STRONG FRIEND IN THE AREA. VICE PRESIDENT ENGULU AND COMMISSAIRE ASSUMANI SEEM AWARE OF POTENTIAL PROBLEM, BUT THERE ARE SIGNS THEY HAVE LIMITED CONTROL OVER SITUATION.

4. ANOTHER TROUBLING SIGN IS SPLIT BETWEEN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES HERE. CONSULATE RECEIVED CLEAR INDICATIONS OF HOSTILITY BETWEEN THE TWO SEVERAL MONTHS AGO WHEN THE MILITARY ATTEMPTED TO ESTABLISH MARTIAL LAW IN THE REGION. SINCE THE INVASION BEGAN, TENSIONS BETWEEN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES HAVE BECOME MUCH STRONGER. THE COMMANDANT OF MILITARY FORCES IN SHABA, GENERAL ZONGIA, OPENLY EXPRESSED OPINION TO CONSULATE OFFICIALS THAT REGIONAL COMMISSIONER ASSUMANI OF DUBIOUS LOYALTY

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TO GOZ. ASSUMANI IN TURN HAS VOICED STRONG SKEPTICISM ABOUT FAZ CAPABILITIES. HEAVY MILITARY PRESENCE IN LUBUMBASHI ON OPENING DAYS AFTER ATTACK GREATLY DISTURBED THE LOCAL POPULATION. IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN CIVILIAN PRESSURE FROM VICE PRESIDENT ENGULU WHICH ENDED IT. WHILE NEITHER THE LOCAL CIVILIAN NOR MILITARY OFFICIALS SEEM ESPECIALLY WELL INFORMED ABOUT FRONT ACTIVITIES, THEY DO NOT SEEM TO SHARE WHAT THEY KNOW. ALTHOUGH EACH MAKES PERIODIC VISITS TO KOLWEZI, THEY DO NOT SEEM TO BE INCLUDED AMONG DECISION-MAKERS. EACH HAS GIVEN INDICATIONS OF NERVOUSNESS ABOUT HIS FUTURE.

5. MILITARY UNITS HAVE NOT YET SHOWN ABILITY TO TAKE INITIATIVE. REPORTS CONTINUE ABOUT TROOPS FLEEING FROM TRUCKS AND TRAINS BEFORE THEY GET TO THE FRONT. UNCONFIRMED REPORTS PERSIST THAT APPROACH TO OCCUPIED COMMUNITIES HAS BEEN TO SHOOT FIRST AND QUESTION LATER. INADEQUATE PROVISIONING WHICH REQUIRES TROOPS TO SEEK SUBSISTANCE LOCALLY HAS NOT BEEN INCREASING FRIENDS FOR GOVERNMENT IN TOWNS OF KOLWEZI AND MUTSHATSHA.

6. IDENTITY AND SIZE OF OCCUPYING FORCE REMAINS A MYSTERY.
NONE OF SENIOR CIVILIAN NOR MILITARY OFFICIALS HAS BEEN WILLING
TO MAKE STRONG STATEMENT ABOUT FOREIGN PRESENCE, PARTICULARLY
ANGOLAN OR CUBAN. GENERAL ZONGIA SAID HE DID NOT THINK ANY OF
INVADERS HAVE YET BEEN CAPTURED.

7. TOWN OF LUBUMBASHI REMAINS QUIET, ALTHOUGH RUMORS ARE
CONSTANT PROBLEM, MOST INVOLVING THE FALL OF SOME TOWN OR OTHER
AND THE INEPTITUDE OF FAZ. MILITARY SITUATION SEEMS TO HAVE
STABILIZED AT ABOUT 24 DEGREES EAST GREENWICH LINE FOR A FEW DAYS,
BUT FEW WILLING TO ACCEPT THIS. IN ABSENCE OF OFFICIAL
INFORMATION, RUMORS WILL CONTINUE TO RULE.

8. POSITION OF UNITED STATES ON INVASION IS BEING WATCHED
VERY CAREFULLY BY MILITARY/CIVILIAN OFFICIALS ON THE ONE SIDE
SEEKING ASSURANCES AND BY LESS-COMMITTED LOCAL AND EXPATRIATE
COMMUNITIES ON THE OTHER WHO SEEM AFRAID U.S. WILL OFFER TOO
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MUCH AID TO WHAT MIGHT BE THE WRONG SIDE OR WHICH MIGHT
INCREASE SUFFERING IN OCCUPIED VILLAGES.
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Message Attributes

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